

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 80

Commending Wilfred George Gooden for his distinguished career of service, humanitarian efforts, and philanthropy dedicated to assisting the people of Jamaica and the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 19, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas (for herself, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. CLARKE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Commending Wilfred George Gooden for his distinguished career of service, humanitarian efforts, and philanthropy dedicated to assisting the people of Jamaica and the United States.

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden was the last of 3 sons born to his parents on February 22, 1922, in Westmoreland, Jamaica;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden was brought up in a Christian home, baptized at the Rollington Town Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and never forgot his first love, Jesus;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden's rich baritone voice could be heard in praises as he called his family and all who entered his home to worship;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden's Christ-like character was seen in his deeds and in the way he treated every person he met;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden treated all persons with respect, courtesy, and kindness, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, political persuasion, title, or status;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden would often bring home 3 or 4 friends unannounced for weekends, all of whom would be warmly received by his generous and compassionate mother;

Whereas in 1944, Wilfred George Gooden traveled to the United States and settled in New York City;

Whereas in New York City, Wilfred George Gooden for many years pursued and enjoyed a successful career in mechanical dentistry and to this day many former clients praise and express appreciation for the quality his service and workmanship;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden, always on the lookout for new adventures and challenges, invested in a brownstone, which needed some repairs, on West 142nd Street in New York City;

Whereas with much enthusiasm, Wilfred George Gooden used his knowledge of plumbing (obtained as a result of his formal liberal arts education) to make the repairs, thus launching a new career in the field of housing rehabilitation;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden, recognizing the importance of expanding one's education, knowledge, and business acumen, enrolled at City College of New York and earned a certificate in building engineering;

Whereas in 1961, Wilfred George Gooden organized a general contracting company with the basic purpose of renovating existing properties;

Whereas as the owner and builder of multiple dwellings, Wilfred George Gooden renovated a group of old tenements into 2 and 3 bedroom, modern, class A apartments;

Whereas in many areas of New York City, Wilfred George Gooden revitalized entire neighborhoods, creating homes that gave and still give each dweller a sense of renewed hope and dignity;

Whereas as a project manager, field superintendent, and general contractor, Wilfred George Gooden renovated a 100-unit apartment complex for the Maurel Realty Corporation and a 50-unit apartment complex for the Almeric Realty Corporation;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden's expertise was recognized by New York Mayor David Dinkins, who appointed him to help improve the city's urban housing program;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden brought to this task his knack for delivering quality housing in the most needy urban areas within budget and on schedule;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden walked with kings and presidents (including President Bill Clinton and former Jamaican Prime Ministers Norman Manley, Michael Manley, Alexander Bustamante, Edward Seaga, and P. J. Patterson), but he never lost the common touch;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden was as at ease and at home in the company of State and local government officials, leaders of the clergy, captains of industry and academia,

as he was with customers, clients, students, friends, neighbors, and family members;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden was asked to serve, and served with distinction, on the Board of Directors of the Housing Board in New York, the Foundation for International Self-Help (FISH) clinics in Jamaica, the American Friends of Jamaica, the Concerned Committee for Christian Education, and the National Association of Jamaican and Supportive Organizations (NAJASO);

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden was honored as a philanthropist by Message Magazine in 1996 for his community service and humanitarianism;

Whereas Faith and Grant College in Huntsville, Alabama, conferred on Wilfred George Gooden the degree of Doctor of Letters;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden shared his achievements by helping others to succeed;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden helped innumerable Jamaicans relocating to New York City to get jobs, many in his own construction company;

Whereas when housing was needed, when food was required, when winter came and clothes and heat were required to keep bodies warm, Jamaicans relocating to New York City and others in the community knew to call Wilfred George Gooden, whose charity was virtually unbounded;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden was deeply committed to the Ephesus Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Manhattan, where he served as Missionary Volunteer Leader, Sabbath School teacher, Sabbath School Superintendent, and Chairman of the Building Committee, where he did so

much to see that the physical plant of the church was maintained in a manner befitting God's people;

Whereas in 1980, Wilfred George Gooden established the Concerned Committee for Christian Education to provide funds for the Christian education of Jamaica's children;

Whereas in 1980, Wilfred George Gooden also facilitated a concert at the National Arena in Jamaica featuring the Cantata Choir from New York;

Whereas the proceeds of the concert were used to refurbish and restart the New Hope Preparatory School at the North Street Seventh-Day Adventist Church;

Whereas the New Hope Preparatory School, which started with one teacher and 2 students, today has grown to 197 students, 12 teachers, and a staff of 5;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden, along with his wife Sybil Gooden, provided scholarships for young people who would otherwise not have been able to attend his alma mater, Northern Caribbean University (formerly West Indies College), and personally assisted students from Jamaica, New York, Alabama, and Kenya to attend college;

Whereas for 15 years, Wilfred George Gooden has arranged for summer employment for many students from various Adventist colleges, thus aiding their pursuit of higher and Christian education;

Whereas Jamaican students pursuing medicine, engineering, dentistry, and other disciplines overseas were assured of tuition, housing, and personal assistance because of the beneficence of Wilfred George Gooden, who wanted to ensure that all Jamaican youth had a chance to succeed so they could make a meaningful contribution to society;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden never lost affection for his native Jamaica, was always ready to support Jamaica, and thought that young people from Jamaica should know more about their heritage;

Whereas with the permission of the Jamaican government, Wilfred George Gooden printed and distributed copies of the Jamaican constitution to every high school student in Jamaica;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden brought notable Americans (such as former New York Mayor David Dinkins and New York City Councilwoman Una Clarke) to the campus of his alma mater, Northern Caribbean University, so that more people could learn of the quality of the Jamaican educational system and what his church and school were doing for the world;

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden lived by the following philosophy and creed: To leave some simple mark behind, to keep his having lived in mind, to be an honest generous foe, and to play any part even if the honors did not fall on him;

Whereas for 57 years, the life of Wilfred George Gooden was enriched and enlarged by the love, companionship, assistance, and partnership of his wife, Sybil; and

Whereas Wilfred George Gooden passed away on January 6, 2007: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives com-
- 2 mends Wilfred George Gooden for his distinguished career
- 3 of service, humanitarian efforts, and philanthropy dedi-

1 cated to assisting the people of Jamaica and the United
2 States.

